

How Law Can Advance Health Equity: An Overview

Dawn M. Hunter, JD, MPH

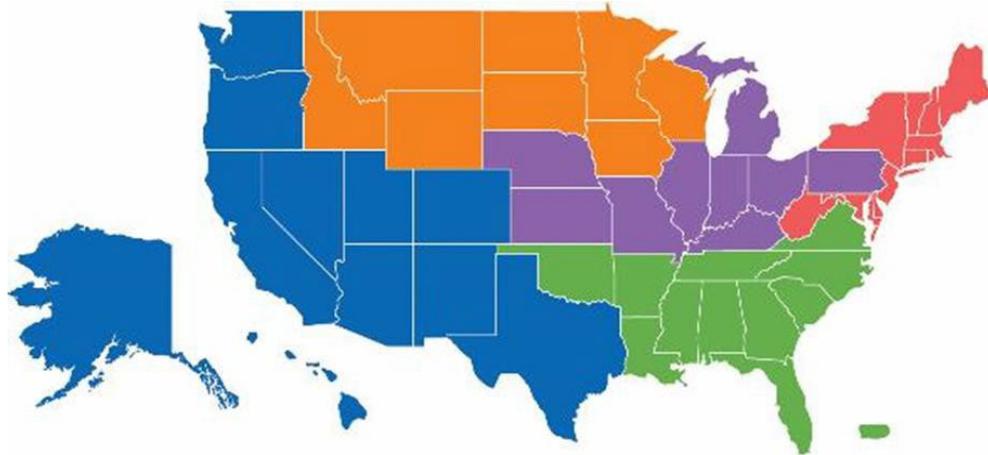
Accelerating the Use of Findings from Patient-Centered Outcomes
Research in Clinical Practice to Improve Health and Health Care: A
Workshop Series

Presented [July 6, 2022]



About the Network for Public Health Law

Through our National Office and five Region Offices, the Network provides legal technical assistance, consulting, trainings and resources to local, state, and national health agencies and organizations across the United States.



What we do:

- Strategic Consultation & Guidance
- Knowledge Building & Training
- Research & Analysis
- Awareness Building & Connection



Comprehensive Public Health Law Expertise

Attorneys in each Network Region have extensive knowledge of:



- Public health law “nuts and bolts.”
- Legal levers to advance health policy.



- Public health agency authority:
 - Constitutional, statutory, regulatory, executive orders;
 - Limits on authority;
 - Due process requirements.



- How public health agencies implement and enforce public health measures:
 - Impact on health equity;
 - Successes in other jurisdictions.





The 5 Essential Public Health Law Services



*Changing Law & Policy Requires
Interdisciplinary Collaborations
...and Smart Advocacy*

Better Health for All Faster



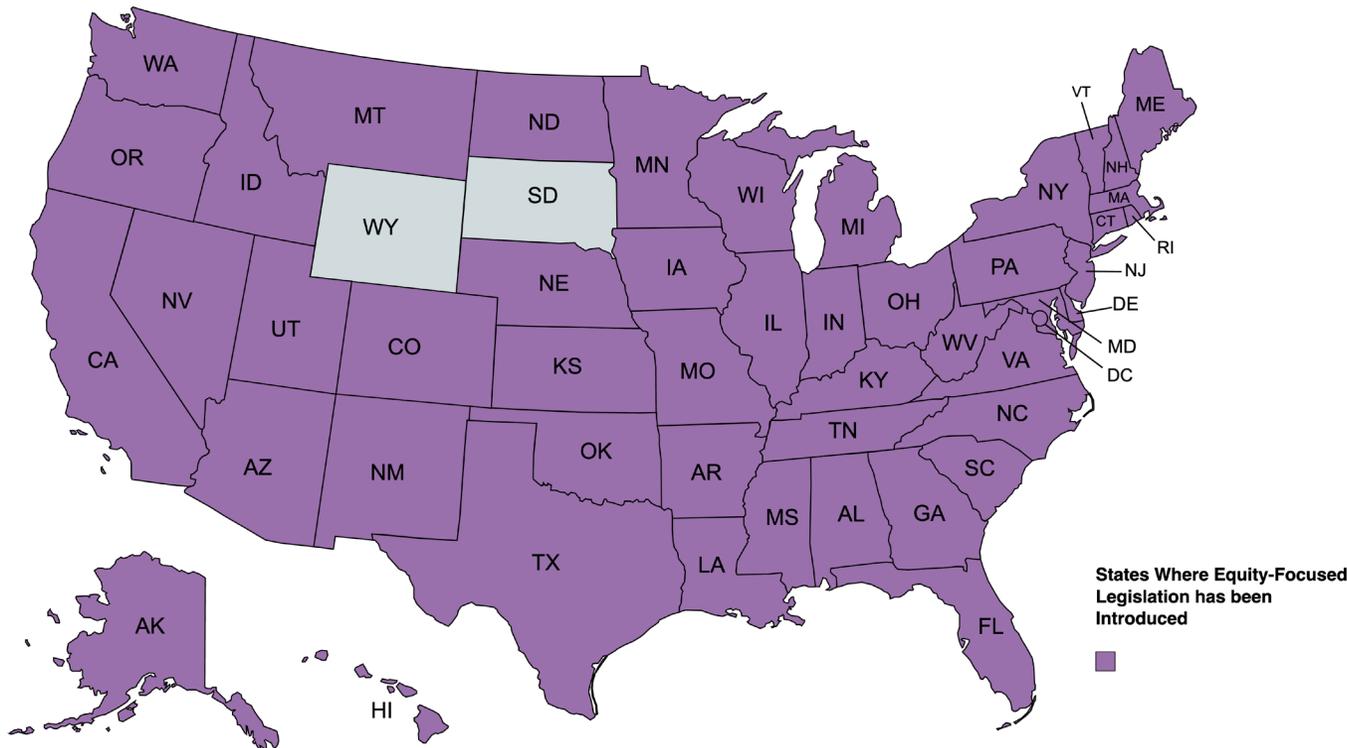
Communications and Advocacy





Health and Racial Equity Legislative Trends, 2021-2022

Topics of bills addressing racism, racial equity, and health equity



- Racism as a public health crisis or emergency
- Early childhood development and education
- Prohibiting teaching "divisive concepts" in public schools
- Improving racial equity in state agency employment
- Data collection and use
- Provider education and training
- Infrastructure and Funding
- Equity in birth outcomes
- **Using racial or health impact statements in policymaking**



Example: St. Petersburg, FL

Community Benefits Agreement

- Approved July 22, 2021
- Resolution: Community Benefits Advisory Committee
- Ordinances: Creating the Program and establishing a Fund

City Charter Review Commission

- Report released July 28, 2021
- Proposed 7 Amendments, with 4 explicitly focused on equity

Declaration of Racism as a Public Health Crisis

- Passed August 5, 2021

Structural Racism Study

- Six-month study completed in November 2021
- City Council Resolution supporting implementation of findings, December 10, 2021



Example: Virginia

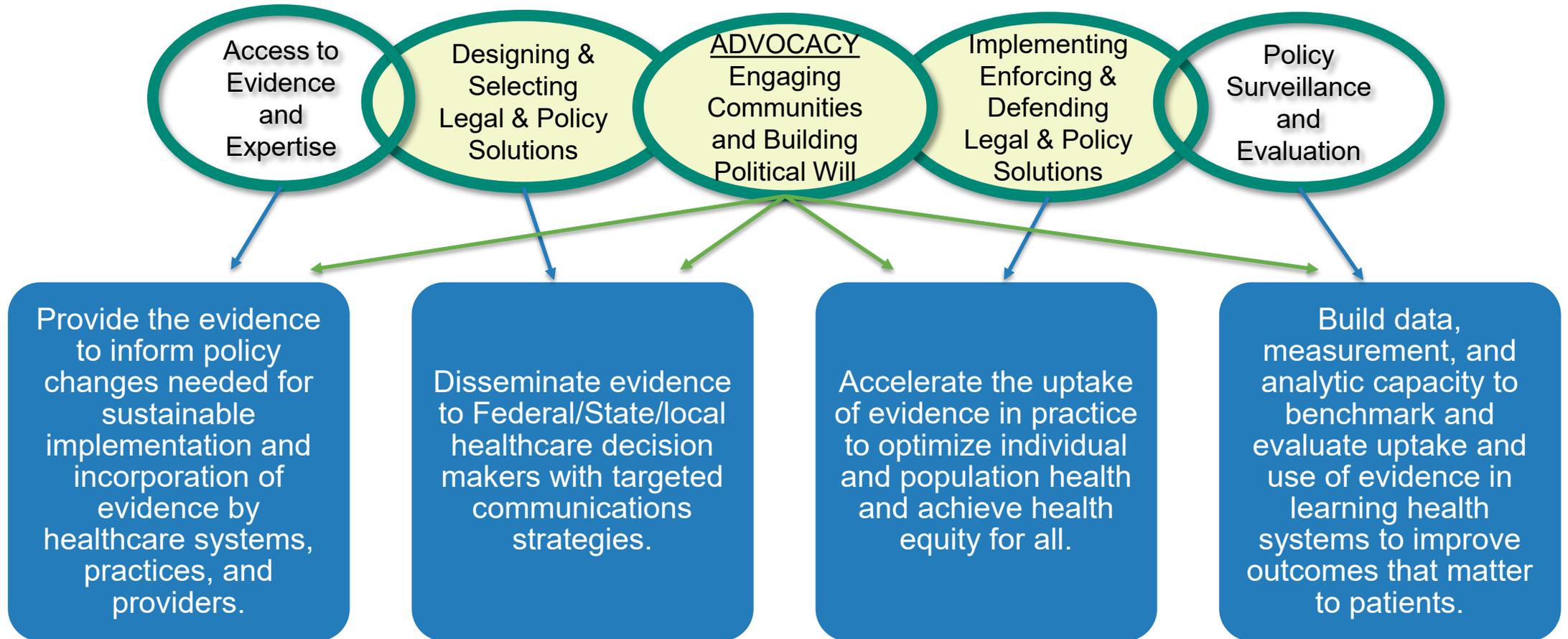
- ✓ **Commission to Examine Racial Equity in Virginia Law**
- ✓ **Resolution that Racism is a Public Health Crisis**
- ✓ **VDH Office of Health Equity**
- ✓ **COVID-19 Health Equity Leadership Task Force**
- ✓ **Voting Rights Act of Virginia**
- ✓ **Executive Order to restore the right to vote to all Virginians not currently incarcerated**



<https://www.governor.virginia.gov/racial-inequity-commission/>



Role of law in advancing AHRQ Cross-Cutting Strategies





Takeaways

1. There are many ways you can impact law and many types of law you can impact.
2. It's important to have a multi-faceted legal and policy approach to advancing health equity.
3. Law and policy are changed through strategic advocacy and communication.





Questions?

Dawn Hunter

dhunter@networkforphl.org

Twitter @dawnmariehunter